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Fed rules for chem plant security OK'd

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The U.S. Senate approved a resolution yesterday that calls for federal standards to protect the nation's chemical facilities from terror attacks.

The resolution, sponsored by Sen. Jon S. Corzine of Hoboken, was approved by unanimous consent and marks the first time Congress has called for mandatory federal standards on chemical plant security.

"Faced with a determined terrorist enemy, we cannot afford to wait," said Corzine in a statement. "I am extremely pleased the Senate is now on record for mandatory federal standards at our nation's unguarded chemical plants, which are essentially prepositioned weapons of mass destruction."

Corzine first drafted and introduced the bill in October 2001, in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks. He cited a recent study released by the Congressional Research Service which found that there are 111 plants in 23 states where chemical accidents could kill or injure more than a million people.

Corzine is now working with Sens. Joe Lieberman, D-Conn., and Susan Collins R-Maine, in writing a bill defining the boundaries of the federal standards.

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